

REMARKS

In response to the pending Office Action, Applicants have cancelled claims 16-18 and 24-32, without prejudice. Claim 19 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter set forth in claims 20 and 22, which have also been cancelled. Claims 21 and 23 have been amended to change the dependency thereof to claim 19. As claims 20 and 22 were indicated to be allowable if amended into independent format, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19, as amended, is in condition for allowance. Claim 19 has also been amended to address the objections thereto and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the helpful suggestion in overcoming the § 112 rejection. No new matter has been added.

It is noted that, as correctly indicated in the Office Action, the “wherein” clause of claim 19 as set forth in Applicants’ previously filed response should have been completely underlined as it represented language added to claim 19. In the instant response, Applicants have underlined the complete “wherein” clause, which has been further amended, so as to comply with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c).

Applicants also note that an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) was filed in the above-identified application on December 28, 2001. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial and return the PTO-1449 form which was filed along with the IDS so that the Applicants can confirm that the references have been considered. If for any reason the Examiner has not received the IDS, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney so that another copy of the IDS can be provided to the Examiner. A copy of the PTO-1449 form is submitted herewith.

Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited.

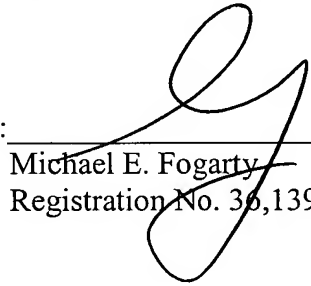
If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

Applicants believe that no extension of time is required. However, this conditional petition is being made to provide for the possibility that Applicants have inadvertently overlooked the need for a petition for extension of time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0417.

Respectfully submitted

McDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY

Date: 4/13/04

By: 
Michael E. Fogarty
Registration No. 36,139

600 13th Street, N.W. , Suite 1200
Washington, D.C. 20005-3096
Telephone: 202-756-8000
Facsimile: 202-756-8087 MEF:rp

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